

DAKOTA PACK

MAGAZINE OF THE SOUTH DAKOTA ARMY AND AIR NATIONAL GUARD • SUMMER 2015

AIRMEN DEPLOY TO SOUTH KOREA

» DEPLOYMENTS

- Det. 48 deploys to Afghanistan

» ACHIEVEMENTS

- NCO and Soldier of the Year announced
- Lieutenant, Warrant Officer of the Year announced

» SERVICE & SUPPORT

- Airmen provide relief to Delmont after tornado
- 196th MEB prepares for real-world operations



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Maj. Gen. Timothy Reisch
The Adjutant General

Maj. Anthony Deiss
State Public Affairs Officer

1st Lt. Chad Carlson
Editor

CONTRIBUTORS

Chaplain (Col.) David Gunderson
Senior Master Sgt. Nancy Ausland
Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Herrmann
Tech. Sgt. Christopher Stewart
Sgt. Michael Borbely
Sgt. Jeremy Eccleston
Sgt. Michelle Monroe
Staff Sgt. Luke Olson
Sgt. Jennifer Smith
Sgt. Mark VanGerpen
Spc. Jessica Schumacher
Spc. Jerico White

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f. 605.342.2053
email: heatherm@simpsonsprinting.com
SimpsonsPrinting.com

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Submissions: Print and photo submissions of general interest to members of the SDNG, their families, civilian employees, veterans and retirees are invited and encouraged. Please send article and photos with name, phone number, e-mail, complete mailing address and comments to: ng.sd.sdarng.list.pao@mail.mil. 605.737.6721. Submissions are subject to editing. Electronic submissions are preferred and digital photos should be at least 300 dpi.

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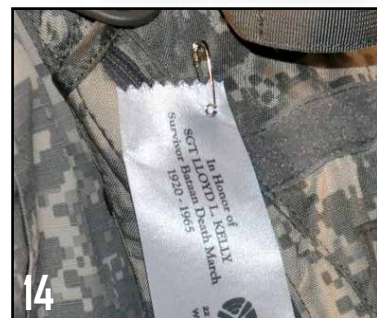


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On the Cover - Tech. Sgt. Derrick Burkhart, 114th Maintenance Squadron munitions controller, holds his daughter, Arianna, before his mobilization ceremony at Joe Foss Field, May 3. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Christopher Stewart)



MESSAGE FROM THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

As I type these words flying aboard South Dakota's C-12 aircraft, which I rely upon greatly to transport me all across the county to perform my job, I have visited SDNG troops in two different states over the past three days. Thanks to highly skilled pilots and maintenance personnel that make up our aviation units.

Before this issue of the Dakota Pack comes off the printing press, five members of Detachment 48, OSA Command will have deployed to Afghanistan, 247 members of the 114th Fighter Wing will have deployed to the Republic of Korea and 162 members of the 155th Engineer Company will be in the final stages of training for their deployment to Kuwait. Just like that, our brief respite from almost 12 years of continuous deployments has come to a halt, and we are once again supporting the needs of our great nation around the world.

Some people have speculated that the continuous use of the National Guard since 9-11 has worn us down, but I disagree. The increased reliance this nation has placed on the National Guard has actually increased our state of readiness, not diminished it. Unlike during much of our 153-year history, today our equipment is very modern and our training dollars are adequate. The men and women who make up our units are all volunteers who know and proudly accept the fact that enlisting or commissioning into the National Guard today is likely to result in a combat tour prior to their discharge date. When our units are notified of a future deployment, they take great pride in it and look forward to performing the mission that their nation needs them to do. The strong support of our families and employers has made this impressive chapter of our history possible. This nation is forever in your debt.

I would like to congratulate Lt. Col. Dave Dailey, Command Sgt. Maj. Todd Mettler and the 153rd Engineer Battalion for being named the most outstanding Army National Guard battalion in the nation and recipients of the Milton A. Reckord Trophy for the second consecutive year. Five of the six companies in the 153rd distinguished themselves as recipients of the Superior Unit Award, and the 211th Engineer Company earned the Eisenhower Trophy as the top company-sized unit in the state. In addition to the 211th, the other SD units who earned the Superior Unit Award are as follows:

- HHC, 153rd Engineer Battalion
- Forward Support Company, 153rd Engineer Battalion
- 155th Engineer Company
- 200th Engineer Company
- HHC, 139th Brigade Support Battalion
- Company B, 139th Brigade Support Battalion
- 115th Brigade Signal Company
- Battery A, 1/147th Field Artillery Battalion
- SD ARNG Training Center Command
- SD ARNG Medical Command
- Company C, 1/189th Aviation Regiment
- 82nd Civil Support Team
- HHD, 196th Regiment, Regional Training Institute

In addition, Company C, 1/189th Aviation earned the Pershing Trophy for being the company-sized unit with the top overall marksmanship scores in the nation, and Alpha Battery of the 1/147th Field Artillery Battalion earned the NGAUS Certificate of Victory. The fact that the SD National Guard earned so many of these national-level awards is a testament to the excellence that is prevalent throughout our great organization.

I would also like to congratulate 1st Lt. Kale Skogen from the 153rd Engineer Battalion for being selected as the winner of the Lt. Col. John J. Steele Award as the most outstanding Lieutenant of the Year in the South Dakota National Guard.

Congratulations are also in order for Chief Warrant Officer 2 Terry Hoey for being named the 2015 recipient of the CW4 Michael F. O'Connor Warrant Officer of the Year Award. Chief Hoey currently serves as commander of the 216th Engineer Detachment (Firefighting Team).

For only the 5th time in the history of the SD National Guard a change of responsibility ceremony was conducted at Joint Force Headquarters during the May drill as CW5 Darla Crown relinquished her responsibilities as the command chief warrant officer of the SD Army National Guard to CW5 Lonny Hofer. CW5 Crown did an outstanding job over the past four years and I wish her and Doug the very best as she enters retirement. I look forward to CW5 Hofer's leadership in this important role in the years ahead. I know he will do a fantastic job as well.

Both the Air and Army Guard has openings to fill in their ranks, so I ask everyone who reads this column to think of quality individuals that you know who would be a good match for our great organization. I think most of us who have served in the S.D. National Guard would acknowledge we get more out of this great organization by way of personal fulfillment than we put into it.

As always, I want to thank all of the Soldiers, Airmen, family members and employers for everything you do to make our organization so great. This state and nation are forever in your debt.

Sincerely,

Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch
The Adjutant General



MESSAGE FROM

THE STATE COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR

When visiting with Soldiers, I often ask them why they choose

to serve in the South Dakota National Guard. A few say for the benefits, such as the GI Bill, enlistment bonuses, or student loan repayment; while a majority of them say SERVICE. When I ask them to

define service, they tell me 'service to their local communities, their state and to their country.' I believe this has always been true of the outstanding people who enlist in the SDNG, especially now. For the members who enlisted for the benefits, I know the reason they stay in the Guard is their commitment to service.

Winston Churchill said, "Never in the history of mankind have so many owed so much too so few." Churchill was referring to the British pilots who, in the face of almost certain destruction, defeated the Axis forces and won the Battle of Britain. I believe Churchill's words are especially relevant today. As of today, only .08 percent of the United States population is serving in the active military, Reserve or National Guard. Never before in the history of our nation has the National Guard been called upon so much to augment the active component in the continuing War on Terror. We are held to the same training standards and requirements as the active component and our

Soldiers must be ready when the call comes, no matter if it's a state or federal activation.

We have an all-volunteer military and the members who serve among our ranks know there is a strong probability they will be deployed abroad or called upon to help our fellow South Dakotans in a time of emergency or crisis. Last year the SDNG was called to assist in the flooding in Union County and the tornado in Wessington Springs. When the Guard arrived at both locations, we were told we brought with us a calming effect to the citizens. They knew we were there to serve them and to keep them safe. That is why people freely offer their continued commitment to the SDNG; SERVICE.

I want to thank all of the Soldiers and their families for their decision to serve. This nation remembers the World War II generation as the Greatest Generation... Well, I believe the .08 percent of people who volunteer to protect our great nation is our next Great Generation. It is you that make the SDNG the best military organization in United States and the ones who keep us safe. Thank you all for your continued and selfless service to our state and to our country.

One Team – One Fight!

State Command Sgt. Maj. Jim Hoekman

Thank you for your service. If you use tobacco, maybe we can return the favor?

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INTERAGENCY MEDEVAC TRAINING EARNS REGIONAL AWARD

By SDNG Public Affairs Office

DENVER – The Great Plains Interagency Dispatch Center was awarded a 2014 Regional Forester Honor Award presented by the Rocky Mountain Region of the U.S. Forest Service in Denver on April 21, for excellence in medical evacuation training.

The award was presented to the Great Plains Interagency Medevac Training Group for outstanding achievement in planning and training for medevac preparedness during fires and other emergencies in order to provide increased coordination between agency employees and partners.

Agency partners include the Black Hills and Nebraska National Forests, Great Plains Dispatch, South Dakota Wildland Fire, the South Dakota National Guard and Black Hills Life Flight.

The honor was earned in the safety category of the Forester's awards, which are presented annually by the U.S. Forest Service. The Forester awards recognize partner organizations and employees who significantly contribute to the U.S. Forest Service mission to sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.



Sgt. 1st Class Greg Holland, Company D, 1-112th Aviation Regiment, secures a mannequin to hoist into a helicopter with the assistance of Jim Lawson, U.S. Forest Service, during the fourth annual Great Plains Interagency Dispatch Center medevac training near Pactola Reservoir, June 25, 2014. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Herrmann)

Representatives from several of the GPIDC partners were on hand to receive the award.

The GPIDC, along with other forest personnel and partners, first developed the medevac training session in the spring of 2011, and it's been conducted annually ever since.

The training program includes how to coordinate medical emergencies, hands-on demonstrations of patient packaging and extraction techniques, patient assessment, radio frequency management, familiarization with the

GPIDC medevac plan and hands-on training with helicopters from the Black Hills National Forest, the South Dakota National Guard and Black Hills Life Flight.

About 30 participants took part in the initial year of training. By 2014, participation has grown to nearly 200 participants from multiple federal, state and private agencies. Participants include firefighters, wilderness crews, park service rangers, front-liners, aviation personnel and dispatchers, among others.

FORMER NFL ATHLETE PROVIDES MOTIVATIONAL MESSAGE TO AIRMEN

By Senior Master Sgt. Nancy Ausland
114th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

SIOUX FALLS – Former NFL player Brian Hansen delivered a motivational message to Airmen and attendees at the annual 114th Fighter Wing prayer breakfast at Joe Foss Field, April 11.

As the prayer breakfast keynote speaker, Hansen, who serves as the ministry director for the South Dakota Fellowship of Christian Athletes, stressed the importance of faith in providing direction in people's lives.

Hansen recounted some of his experiences in the NFL and how his faith and Christianity played a vital part in his success.

"I wanted to speak about the two things I know best: football and Christianity," said Hansen, who grew up in Hawarden, Iowa, and had a 15 year career in the NFL as a punter – playing for the New Orleans Saints, New England Patriots, Cleveland Browns, New York Jets and the Washington Redskins.

Hansen said he has asked himself one question throughout his life quite often, "How in the world did I get here?"

He said he believes it was divine intervention that allowed him to do the things he's achieved such as playing for so many years in the NFL.

Many Airmen enjoy the selection of speakers such as Hansen and others for the breakfast because of the focus they bring to balancing faith and leadership.

"If there has been a theme running through the selection of speakers for our annual prayer breakfasts it would have to be faith-based leadership," said Lt. Col. William Tesch, 114th Fighter Wing chaplain. "This year, Brian Hansen was invited because he is an acknowledged and respected Christian leader of young men and women in the athletic community."

Each year the chaplain staff of the 114th Fighter Wing tries to bring in a new keynote speaker in for the event.

"We knew Brian would have something important and relevant to share," said Tesch. "His inspiring message about the importance of investing one hundred percent in your faith in God did not disappoint."



Brian Hansen

SD ARMY GUARD UNITS RECEIVE NATIONAL, STATE READINESS AWARDS

By SDNG Public Affairs Office

RAPID CITY – Sixteen of 42 South Dakota Army National Guard units received national and state level readiness awards for 2014, announced by the National Guard Bureau in April.

For a second year in a row, the Huron-based 153rd Engineer Battalion received the Major General Milton A. Reckord Trophy as the most outstanding Army National Guard battalion in the nation for achieving the highest standards in training and readiness.

Fourteen units received the National Guard Bureau's Superior Unit Award in recognition of outstanding achievement. The Superior Unit Award is presented to units who meet highly-enforced military standards in the areas of personnel, training and readiness.

Madison and De Smet's 211th Engineer Company took top honors in the Superior Unit Awards category and awarded the Eisenhower Trophy as the most exceptional SDARNG unit in the state.

Rapid City's Company C, 1-189th Aviation Regiment received the General John J. Pershing Trophy for weapons marksmanship. The unit attained the highest figure of merit (highest percentage of assigned members qualified) during annual weapons qualification firing with assigned individual weapons.

"Earning these awards is a testament to the dedication, professionalism and work ethic of the men and women of the South Dakota Army National Guard," said Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch, adjutant general of the SDNG. "As a

leading force, South Dakotans can be confident that our Soldiers' training and readiness is at the highest level, and we are prepared to serve and protect our communities, state and nation."

The SDARNG continues a second straight year of training excellence. Last year, a dozen units received the Superior Unit Award, with eight receiving for a second time.

Units that received the Superior Unit Award this year include:

- Battery A, 1-147th Field Artillery Battalion*
Aberdeen
- 115th Brigade Signal Company*
Brookings
- HHC, 139th Brigade Support Battalion*
Brookings
- HHC, 153rd Engineer Battalion*
Huron
- Forward Support Company, 153rd Engineer Battalion*
Huron and Parkston
- 211th Engineer Company*
Madison and De Smet
- Company B, 139th Brigade Support Battalion
Mitchell
- 200th Engineer Company*
Pierre, Mobridge and Chamberlain
- 155th Engineer Company*
Rapid City and Wagner
- Training Center Command
Rapid City
- Medical Command
Rapid City
- Company C, 1-189th Aviation Regiment
Rapid City
- 82nd Civil Support Team
Rapid City
- HHD, 196th Regiment, Regional Training Institute
Sturgis

* Denotes second straight year for receiving the award.



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SD NATIONAL GUARD AIRMEN DEPLOY TO SOUTH KOREA

By Staff Sgt. Luke Olson
114th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

SIOUX FALLS – Approximately 250 Airmen of the South Dakota Air National Guard's 114th Fighter Wing gathered with friends and family for a mobilization ceremony at Joe Foss Field, May 3.

The Airmen deployed to South Korea in support of a rotational Theater Security Package to the region. Rotational TSPs allow the U.S. Air Force to maintain a significant presence within the Pacific Theater.

"It's time to deploy and our leadership is here and ready," said Col. Russ Walz, 114th commander. "Our mission is to support our nation's continued commitment to regional stability and security around the world."

This deployment will provide valuable training opportunities for the 114th and further develop relationships with international partners. While in South Korea, the Airmen will integrate with U.S. and the Republic of Korea Air Force members to fly daily training missions.

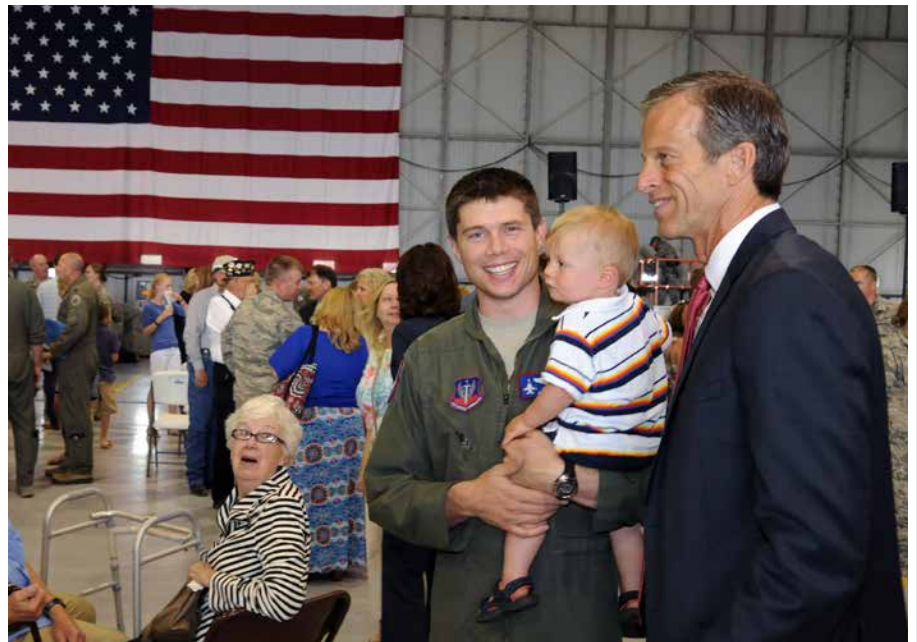
It is not only the unit members that contribute to the mission; it is also their families who make a sacrifice.

"To the families that are here today, we want to say thank you," said U.S. Sen. John Thune of South Dakota. "You also pay a great price and are part of the cost of freedom that all of us as a country have to pay."

The 114th will have the opportunity to fulfill the federal side of their two-fold mission: to deploy worldwide and execute directed tactical fighter sorties to destroy enemy forces, supplies, equipment, communications systems and installations with conventional weapons, or when directed by the governor to protect life and property, preserve peace, order and public safety.

"We can't forget that freedom has a cost," said Thune. "We have people who are willing to pay that cost and we as a country have to be there to support them."

Members of the 114th Logistics Readiness Squadron assist C-5 Galaxy crewmembers load a mobile light unit to the aircraft at Joe Foss Field, May 7. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Luke Olson)



U.S. Sen. John Thune of South Dakota visits with Capt. Casey Minor, 175th Fighter Squadron pilot, and his family to thank them for their service after a mobilization ceremony at Joe Foss Field May 3. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Luke Olson)



Master Sgt. Cameron Allsup, 114th Maintenance Group crew chief, says goodbye to a group of Airmen deploying to South Korea as they board a C-17 Globemaster at Joe Foss Field, May 7.

(Photo by Staff Sgt. Luke Olson)



EMPLOYERS RECEIVE UNIQUE LOOK INTO AIR GUARD TRAINING

By Staff Sgt. Luke Olson
114th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

SIoux FALLS – The South Dakota Air National Guard's 114th Fighter Wing and South Dakota Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve invited about 20 employers and civic leaders on a "Boss Lift" air refueling mission that departed from Joe Foss Field, April 11.

The employers nominated by their Air Guard employees, boarded two KC-135 Stratotankers assigned to the 185th Air Refueling Wing, of Sioux City, Iowa, and witnessed three 114th F-16 Fighting Falcon jets conduct an air refueling training mission.

The ESGR Boss Lift program is intended to gain and maintain support from all public and private employers of Reserve component members by providing insight into their employee's military duty.

Each employer was invited to the boom operator's bay on the aircraft to observe the refueling action up close. The Boss Lift provides employers an opportunity to see first-hand what citizen-Airmen experience while away from work to attend military training or activated for a federal or state mission.

Col. Russ Walz, 114th commander, briefed the employers about the 114th and the SDANG and spoke about a variety of topics to include: mission accomplishment, deployments, readiness, recent awards and economic impacts. Walz explained how the 114th provides coverage to protect the homeland 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and 365 days a year and expressed his thanks to the employers for their support of this mission.

Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch, adjutant general of the SDNG, briefed the group about the history of the SDNG and emphasized how much he values the employers' support of service members.

"We rely greatly on our traditional Guardsman and Reservists and without your support we wouldn't be able to do our jobs," said Reisch. "The role you play is certainly a direct role in the defense of this nation."

Almost half of the nation's military strength resides in the National Guard and Reserve making them an essential part of the military. The link between members of the National Guard and Reserve and their civilian employers led to the creation of ESGR.

"A successful Boss Lift helps develop strong personal relationships between employers of Reserve component members and the Department of Defense," said Jonathan Goehring, ESGR program support technician. "It provides employers and supervisors the opportunity to better understand what their employees do when they are away from their civilian occupation for military duty."

The ESGR representatives also explained the mission of ESGR, which is to develop and promote employer support for Guard and Reserve service by advocating relevant initiatives, recognizing outstanding support, increasing awareness of applicable laws, and resolving conflict between employers and service members.

The employers concluded the day by signing the ESGR "Statement of Support," which is the cornerstone of ESGR's efforts to gain and maintain employer support and is intended to 'open the door' to develop employers as advocates for their employees participation in the National Guard and Reserve.



A 114th Fighter Wing F-16 Fighting Falcon descends after refueling from the KC-135R Stratotanker from the 185th Air Refueling Wing, Sioux City, Iowa. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Luke Olson)



Employers and business leaders from across South Dakota pose for a group photo before boarding a KC-135 Stratotanker refueler aircraft. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Luke Olson)

82ND CST WELCOMES NEW COMMANDER

By Senior Master Sgt. Nancy Ausland
114th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

RAPID CITY – Lt. Col. Pete Jerzak assumed command of the South Dakota National Guard's 82nd Civil Support Team during a May 8 ceremony at Ellsworth Air Force Base.

Jerzak received command of the Rapid City-based unit from Lt. Col. Brendan Murphy who commanded the unit since May 2013.

Jerzak spoke of his expectations of the unit.

"How do you take something that's very good and make it better?" he said. "That's the challenge we have, because when you think you're good that's when you get complacent. So we want to always push ourselves."

Jerzak previously served with the CST as their deputy commander from 2005-2010 and comes from Joint Force Headquarters where he served as the J7

Readiness Branch chief.

The outgoing commander gave credit to the team he led the past two years for all of their hard work.

"I couldn't be more proud of the 82nd," said Murphy. "All of their hard work and dedication made my command experience one I will cherish forever. I am happy to have served alongside each one of them."

Murphy will now serve as the executive officer to the adjutant general of the SDNG.

The 82nd CST is the state's all-hazard response team capable of detecting chemical, biological, radiological and explosive materials. The unit responds to incidents of local, state and national significance and provides support to civilian authority and agencies such as local fire departments, police/

sheriff departments, county emergency management offices and other agencies of the first-responder community.



Lt. Col. Pete Jerzak



Above: Sgt. Derek Labeau, Chief Warrant Officer 2 Michael Williams, Chief Warrant Officer 3 William Preston, Chief Warrant Officer 4 Wayne Walker and Sgt. 1st Class Randall McCann, members of Det. 48, stand for roll call during the unit's activation ceremony. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Herrmann)

Below: Sgt. Derek Labeau, Detachment 48, gives his 17-month-old daughter, Norah, a kiss goodbye during the unit's activation ceremony. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Herrmann)



RAPID CITY SOLDIERS HONORED DURING DEPLOYMENT CEREMONY

By SDNG Public Affairs Office

RAPID CITY – Family and friends of the South Dakota Army National Guard's Detachment 48, Operational Support Airlift Command, gathered for an activation ceremony at the Army Aviation Support Facility in Rapid City, May 13.

Five members of the Rapid City-based unit will deploy to Afghanistan in support of Task Force ODIN for up to one year.

"Whether it's a tragedy or disaster here at home or the nation's call to defend us here or abroad, the South Dakota National Guard is ready to respond. Today is a perfect example of that," said Gov. Dennis Daugaard. "Thank you for your willingness to serve our state and nation. I look forward to the day when you're back safe and sound."

Detachment 48 is a fixed-wing aviation unit comprised of pilots and operations specialists which operate the C-12 King Air. The unit's primary mission in theater is to provide aerial reconnaissance and surveillance in support of U.S. and coalition ground commanders in the field.

"Our primary focus is we support the ground troops, whether that is finding IED's (improvised explosive device) or doing route clearance finding insurgents, we provide battlefield intelligence to the commander on the ground," said Chief Warrant Officer 4 Wayne Walker, Det. 48 commander.

"This deployment will be quite a bit different, we will be supporting ground commanders instead of conducting VIP missions," said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Michael Williams, C-12 pilot and Afghanistan veteran. "I am looking forward to getting more flight experience as a pilot and to develop professionally."

This will be the third mobilization for the unit, which deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in 2008 and 2011.

"The fact that this unit has been called up on back-to-back deployments is a clear testament to its significant battle in the warfight," said Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch, adjutant general of the SDNG. "I couldn't be more proud of this unit. I

know that you have worked and trained hard. Every one of you are ready to go and do this mission, and it's an important mission, extremely important."

"We are starting to get used to this, there are five of us going on this deployment and we have thirteen previous deployments between us," said Walker.

"We know where we are going and what to expect," said Sgt. 1st Class Randall McCann, aerial sensor operator who has deployed twice. "There are not a lot of changes so my anxiety level is not as high."

Although the Soldiers will be away from their loved ones, they consider their unit a family.

"We are a very small unit with five members so we are all pretty close," said McCann. "It makes it easier to go with people you know and are close to. I consider them my second family."

The Soldiers are not the only ones deploying. Their family also deploys by stepping up on the home front.

"To all the spouses and family members please know that your contributions do not go unnoticed," said Reisch. "It's often said that family members who remain behind take on burdens often as great as the Soldier or Airmen that deploys, because you alone handle all the emergencies that happen during the next year."

Reisch made it clear the Guard is here to help them in their time of need.

"Please know that we are here to help you," said Reisch. "We have plenty of Soldiers and Airmen that at a drop of a hat, if you need some help, we will be here for you."

"I'm going to miss my family the most, we have a close-knit family," said Williams. "I will miss just being home and doing things together. It will be good, but also a challenge. It will help with communication because we will have to learn to express ourselves through FaceTime or Skype."

SD NATIONAL GUARD PROVIDES RELIEF TO DELMONT AFTER TORNADO

By Senior Master Sgt. Nancy Ausland
114th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

SIOUX FALLS – South Dakota Gov. Dennis Daugaard activated about 25 members of the South Dakota National Guard's 114th Fighter Wing Civil Engineer Squadron to assist with tornado recovery efforts in the community of Delmont, May 11.

Daugaard surveyed the damage and declared a state of emergency in Delmont after an F2 tornado impacted the town of about 230 people May 10. The Guard focused on debris removal.

Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch, the adjutant general of the SDNG, also traveled to Delmont to survey the damage.

"Assisting communities in the aftermath of a natural disaster is a key role of the National Guard," said Reisch. "We are proud to assist the citizens of Delmont who were impacted by this tragedy."

The Guard coordinated their efforts with officials on site from the S.D. Department of Public Safety.



Members of the South Dakota Air National Guard 114th Civil Engineer Squadron assist with tornado recovery efforts in Delmont, S.D., after the town was hit by an F-2 tornado, May 10.



SD GUARD NAMES LIEUTENANT, WARRANT OFFICER OF THE YEAR

By 1st Lt. Chad Carlson

SDNG Public Affairs Office

HURON - The South Dakota National Guard named their 2015 Lieutenant and Warrant Officer of the Year at the National Guard Association of South Dakota annual officers' conference in Huron, April 18.

First Lt. Kale Skogen, of White, received the Lt. Col. John J. Steele Award, naming him the SDNG's Lieutenant of the Year.

Skogen, who currently serves as the assistant operations officer in the Headquarters Company of the 153rd Engineer Battalion in Huron, was selected as the most exceptional lieutenant after competing against lieutenants from each of the SDNG's major commands.

"It was a great honor for me to be able to represent my battalion and brigade well," Skogen said. "I feel privileged to have been chosen among such tough competition and quality lieutenants that we have across the state."

Skogen, who has been a member of the South Dakota Army National Guard for nine years, first enlisted as a carpentry and masonry specialist in the 155th Engineer Company. While attending college at South Dakota State University, he enrolled in the ROTC program and commissioned in May 2011.

He served as a platoon leader (2011-2012) and an executive officer (2012-2014) in the 211th Engineer Company before moving into his current position.

"First Lt. Skogen always performs his duties and accomplishes all assigned missions with the utmost professionalism," said Col. Terry Ommen, commander of the 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade. "His accomplishments and dedication to duty over the past year have definitely earned him the distinction of being recognized as the South Dakota National Guard's most outstanding lieutenant of the year."

In addition to his responsibilities in the National Guard, Skogen instructs at Brookings High School, where he teaches students the various aspects of residential construction and woodworking skills. Throughout the year, he also operates New Horizons Construction, a construction company and snow removal business.

"I'm thankful for everything the South Dakota National Guard has done for me - in shaping my character and leadership," Skogen said. "Hopefully those characteristics have in turn benefited my community as well."

Skogen has volunteered on the Fire Department of White for the past three years and is a large advocate of the Habitat for Humanity Program within the Brookings area, said Ommen.

"He has donated over 300 hours of community service to assist on two separate Habitat for Humanity projects and utilizes his skills whenever possible to benefit his community," Ommen said.

The Lt. Col. John J. Steele Award was established in 1968 to annually recognize the most outstanding lieutenant in the South Dakota National Guard. Selection is based on exceptional qualities of leadership, values and performance.

Other officers representing their major command for this year's award competition were 1st Lt. Edna Knutson, 109th Regional Support Group; 1st Lt. Adam Punt, 114th Fighter Wing, and 1st Lt. Justin Warfel, 196th Regiment (Regional Training Institute).

The CW4 Michael F. O'Connor Warrant Officer of the Year Award was then presented to Chief Warrant Officer 2 Terry Hoey, of Sturgis.

Hoey, who currently serves as commander of the 216th Engineer Detachment (Firefighting Team), was selected as the most exceptional warrant officer after competing against warrant officers from each of the SDARNG's major commands.

"Being named the warrant officer of the year is extremely humbling," Hoey said. "I really feel that my Soldiers and my staff, including the battalion staff, did all of the work. I simply followed the guidance that I was given."

Hoey, who has 21 years of military service, five as an active duty Marine and 17 in the South Dakota Army National Guard, manages both the 216th and 451st Firefighting Teams, a non-traditional command assignment for warrant officers.



First Lt. Kale Skogen and Chief Warrant Officer 2 Terry Hoey

"CW2 Hoey's leadership and dedication to this organization is reflected in the excellence of the firefighting teams," said Lt. Col. Michael Snow, commander of the 881st Troop Command. "His units are a cohesive group of highly motivated professionals. Under his leadership, they have proven themselves both at home and abroad."

Hoey deployed to Kuwait with the SDARNG's 155th Engineer Detachment from June 2002 to February 2003 as an electrician team leader.



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"When we were in Kuwait, five of us had the very unique opportunity to deploy from Kuwait to Djibouti, Africa," Hoey said. "So I spent three months in Djibouti as a team leader."

In addition to his responsibilities in the firefighting teams, Hoey works fulltime for the SDARNG's Training Site, where he manages facilities at Fort Meade, Sturgis and Belle Fourche.

"I can't wait to get back to drill so that I can personally thank each and every one of my Soldiers

in the 216th and 451st for helping make this happen," said Hoey. "It's a great honor to be part of such a cohesive team."

"When my name was called I was completely stunned," Hoey said. "I knew how fierce the competition would be, because I know the other warrants that were boarded and they are extremely high caliber warrant officers."

Other warrant officers representing their major command for this year's award competition were

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Wesley Walker, Joint Force Headquarters, and Chief Warrant Officer 2 Brent Simon, 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade.

The CW4 Michael F. O'Connor Award was established in 2000 to recognize the most outstanding South Dakota Army National Guard Warrant Officer of the past year. Criterion for the award is based on exceptional qualities of technical knowledge, leadership, dedication and initiative.

SD SOLDIER'S LEADERSHIP STYLE GAINS NATIONAL RECOGNITION

By Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Herrmann
SDNG Public Affairs Office



Warrant Officer Kenneth Podzimek

RAPID CITY – The U.S. Army announced that a South Dakota Army National Guard warrant officer will receive the General Douglas MacArthur leadership award, during a May 29 ceremony at the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia.

Warrant Officer Kenneth Podzimek, of Wagner, a construction engineer technician in the 155th Engineer Company is the first SDARNG warrant officer to receive the award.

The U.S. Army awards one warrant officer and six officers annually, from the active duty component, the Army Reserve and

the Army National Guard, who demonstrate the ideals for which General MacArthur stood – duty, honor and country.

"When I found out that one warrant officer in the entire National Guard would be selected, I figured my chance of winning this award were slim to none," said Podzimek. "When I read the list of award winners and saw my name...I had to read it about three to four more times. I couldn't believe it."

To be chosen among so many great warrant officers and to receive this award is a humbling experience, he said.

Just one example of Podzimek's effective leadership style was demonstrated when the 155th suffered the loss of a Soldier, said Lt. Col. David Dailey, 153rd Engineer Battalion commander.

"He led from the front, took the time to talk to his Soldiers individually and mentored them through a very difficult time," said Dailey. "He has been an instrumental leader, using his abilities to mentor his subordinates to become a cohesive and resilient platoon."

Podzimek's technical knowledge shined when he managed more than four construction projects and his team responded to the flood operations in southeast South Dakota and the tornado clean up for the Wessington Springs community, said Dailey.

"He always makes an extraordinary effort to ensure his company is able to accomplish any mission," said Dailey. "His dedication and integrity to the mission first, epitomizes the ideals for which this award stands for."

His leadership style is a direct reflection of his former leaders in the SDARNG, said Podzimek.

"I've had the luxury of having good leaders throughout my military career," he said. "They've taught me to do more than the work of a commander, to get your hands dirty and do some manual labor right alongside your Soldiers."

Outside of his National Guard commitment, Podzimek balances duties as a full-time electrician for the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers and an owner of a part-time cooling and heating business.

"He maintains a full schedule with his civilian and military obligations but always finds time to remain active in his community and spend time with his family," said Dailey.

Podzimek is active in his community, volunteering his time and resources to his local fire department and VFW Post 7319.

"His willingness to give back to his community through volunteering his time to local organizations directly reflects his values," Dailey said. "He is a top notch leader with unlimited potential that, without a doubt, has earned him the distinction of being recognized as the General Douglas Leadership award recipient."

1742ND TRANSPORTATION COMPANY CHANGES COMMAND

By SDNG Public Affairs Office

SIOUX FALLS – Capt. Jason Kimura assumed command of the South Dakota Army National Guard's 1742nd Transportation Company at a May 2 ceremony in Sioux Falls.

Kimura received command of the Sioux Falls and Flandreau-based 1742nd from Capt. Tyler Gerlach, who had commanded the unit since Dec. 1, 2012.

"Gerlach is an excellent leader and filling his boots will not be easy," Kimura said, after accepting command of the more than 160 Soldiers of the 1742nd. "I am up for the challenge and excited to begin training as we move the unit forward and continue with excellence."

In civilian life, Kimura is employed by Shawn Krull Designs in Rapid City as a project manager. He has been a member of the SDARNG for 10 years.

Gerlach will be assigned as the S4 logistics officer with the Headquarters Company of the 152nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion in Pierre.

The 1742nd provides transportation of dry and refrigerated containerized cargo, general non-containerized cargo, and bulk water and fuel products, using its M-915A tractors with M872A1 trailers to complete assigned missions.



Capt. Jason Kimura, left, prepares to receive the 1742nd Transportation Company guidon from Lt. Col. Jade Beehler, right, 152nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion commander, during a change of command ceremony. (Photo by Spc. Jerica White)

TOP SD SOLDIERS COMPETE IN

By Spc. Jessica Schumacher and Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Herrmann
129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment



Soldier of the Year Spc. Patrick Moran



Staff Sgt. David Goodwin, Joint Force Headquarters, and Sgt. Ryan Dannen, with the 211th Engineer Company, compete in the five-mile ruck march.

The top eight Soldiers in the South Dakota Army National Guard competed in the state's Best Warrior Competition in Watertown, April 17-18, to be named the Soldier or Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year.

Soldiers compete in a variety of events such as a timed five-mile ruck march, weapons marksmanship, obstacle course, land navigation, written exams and memory tests. In the end, the Soldier and NCO with the highest overall scores are named Soldier and NCO of the Year respectively.

The competition pushes Soldiers out of their comfort zones, challenging them mentally and physically, with a non-stop schedule of basic warrior skills, said Sgt. Maj. Phillip Lakner, a competition facilitator.

In addition to warrior tasks and battle drills, course facilitators add pressure and stress to the competition.

"The ability to think while being put under stress is something you want to see in a warrior," said Lakner. "By the end you can start to see separation between the mentally and physically tough and the ones who are 'resting on their laurels' if you will."

One way facilitators add stress is to keep the competitors moving from one event to the next without knowing what will be expected of them.

"The hardest part of the competition is the unknown," said Staff Sgt. David Goodwin of Black Hawk, a competitor representing the Rapid City-based Joint Force Headquarters. "We didn't know the distance of the ruck march so I didn't know how hard to push myself throughout the course."

Following the ruck march, competitors were tested on the weapons range with the M-9 pistol and M-16 rifle before moving onto an obstacle course and other timed-events until 1 a.m. Later that morning, competitors reported to a review board, where they were tested on a range of Army knowledge.

"After we were done with them Saturday morning they were tired," said Lakner. "We beat them up pretty good in the aspects of brain power and physical endurance. They were pretty much smoked."

Once scores were tallied, Spc. Patrick Moran, 82nd Civil Support Team was announced as the 2015 Soldier of the Year and Sgt. 1st Class Randy Pryor, 1st Battalion Officer Candidate School, 196th Regiment, was named NCO of the Year.

"I was surprised," said Pryor, of Plankinton, upon hearing his name called as the NCO of the Year. "This was a challenging and stressful competition and the competitors were strong too. They kept me motivated as they were doing their best, so I had to bring out my best."

Moran will not be able to participate in the Region 6 Best Warrior due to work obligations giving runner-up Sgt. Ryan Dannen, of the 211th



Staff Sgt. Alex Page with the 82nd Civil Support Team competes in the obstacle course.

BEST WARRIOR COMPETITION

Engineer Company, the opportunity to compete in his place.

Pryor and Dannen said it will be an honor to represent South Dakota at the Region 6 Best Warrior competition at Camp Guernsey in Wyoming May. They will compete against Soldiers from Alaska, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming and North Dakota to earn the Region 6 Best Warrior titles and advance to the national competition.

"I truly believe that we have the quality of Soldiers and the spirit here in South Dakota to win," said Lakner.

Participants in this year's competition: Sgt. 1st Class Paul Ebsen, 211th Engineer Company; Spc. Seth Mulvehille, 451st Fire Fighting Team; Spc. Zachary Fontenille, 115th Signal Company; Staff Sgt. David Goodwin, Joint Force Headquarters, and Staff Sgt. Alex Page, 82nd Civil Support Team.

SOLDIER OF THE YEAR – SPC. PATRICK MORAN

Moran, works full-time as a survey team member with the SDARNG's 82nd Civil Support Team out of Ellsworth Air Force Base, he joined the National Guard in June 2011.

He is a combat veteran who deployed to Afghanistan with the 152nd Combat Support Sustainment Battalion in 2013.

Moran resides in Rapid City with his wife, Jacey, and two daughters, Monica, 4, and Erica, a 4-month-old baby.

When he is not working or spending time with family, he trains for marathons and is looking forward to participating in the Deadwood Mickelson Trail Marathon held in June.

NCO OF THE YEAR – SGT. 1ST CLASS RANDY PRYOR

Pryor, an instructor with 1st Battalion Officer Candidate School, 196th Regiment joined the National Guard in January 2002.

He is a combat veteran who deployed to Iraq with 2nd Battalion, 147th Field Artillery from December 2003 to June 2005 and deployed again with Bravo Battery, 1st Battalion, 147th Field Artillery for one year in 2007-2008.

Pryor resides in Plankinton with his wife, Jennifer, and two kids, Makenna, 3, and Cason 1.

He is a full-time unit manager at Aurora Plains Academy, an intensive residential treatment facility for behavioral and mental health care.

When he is not working or spending time with his family, he is currently training for the Lean Horse 100 ultra marathon held in Custer this August.



NCO of the Year Sgt. 1st Class Randy Pryor



Spc. Patrick Moran, 82nd Civil Support Team, competes in a timed event.



Sgt. 1st Class Paul Ebsen, 211th Engineer Company, competes in the obstacle course.

Soldiers March to Honor the Fallen

By 1st Lt. Chad Carlson
SDNG Public Affairs Office

A group of South Dakota National Guard Soldiers joined thousands from across the country to march through the high desert terrain of White Sands Missile Range, New Mexico, March 22 for the 26th Annual Bataan Memorial Death March.

The 26.2-mile march honors the tens of thousands of Soldiers, Sailors and Marines, both American and Filipino, who were taken prisoner, April 9, 1942 by Japanese forces in World War II.

The prisoners were forced to march to POW camps, beginning on the southern end of the Bataan Peninsula in the Philippines, more than 60 miles in the scorching heat through the Philippine jungles.

The horrible conditions and harsh treatment of the prisoners during the Bataan Death March resulted in an estimated 7,000 to 10,000 deaths. Those who survived faced the hardships of a prisoner of war camp.

Sgt. Jeremy Eccleston, a member of the 842nd Engineer Company in Spearfish, has completed the march three times now. This year, he found inspiration locally and reached out to family members of Sgt. Lloyd L. Kelly (1920-1965), living in Rapid City.

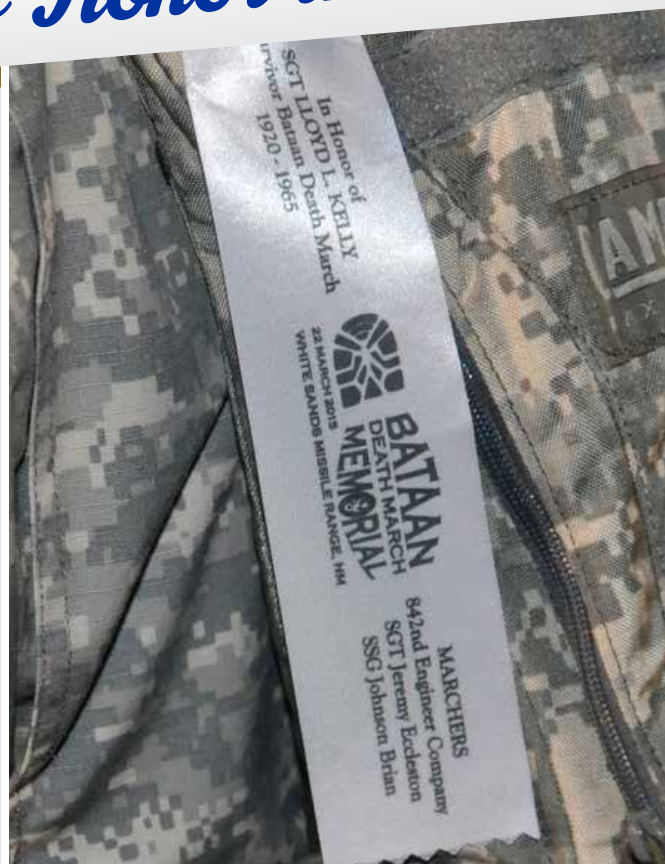
Eccleston spoke with Tanya Nelson, Lloyd's granddaughter, and asked her if he and another Soldier (Staff Sgt. Brian Johnson of the Detachment 1, 842nd Engineer Company, in Belle Fourche) could do the march in her grandfather's honor.

"It meant a lot to our family," said Tanya, who first asked her father, Marlin, and uncles, Joe and Clayton, how they would feel about their father being honored by local Soldiers in this year's march. "They were honored. It was so nice to hear about people wanting to march in his honor after all these years."

During the march, Eccleston and Johnson each wore a ribbon honoring Kelly and carried another, which they presented to Tanya, March 26 in Rapid City.



A group of South Dakota Army National Guard Soldiers gather before the start of the 26th Annual Bataan Memorial Death March at White Sands Missile Range, New Mexico, March 22. Pictured from left to right are: Sgt. Jeremy Eccleston, 842nd Engineer Company; Staff Sgt. Mark Poncelet, 211th Engineer Company; Chief Warrant Officer 3 Ryan Mattfield, 196th Regiment (Regional Training Institute); Sgt. Ryan Dannon, 211th Engineer Company; Staff Sgt. Shawn Dempsey, 153rd Engineer Battalion, Huron; Sgt. Katherina Schaefer, 842nd Engineer Company; Staff Sgt. Louis du Randt, 211th Engineer Company and Staff Sgt. Brian Johnson, Det. 1, 842nd Engineer Company. (Courtesy photo)



"That was so cool and completely unexpected," said Tanya, who plans on framing the ribbon for her father and uncles.

Other South Dakota Soldiers drew inspiration from Bataan survivors themselves, who attended this year's memorial march and shared stories of their hardships with marchers firsthand.

"It was quite humbling to meet the Bataan survivors and to hear their story," said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Ryan Mattfield, a member of the 196th Regiment, Regional Training Institute, in Sturgis, a first participant. "It was a constant reminder during the march that any discomfort I was feeling paled in comparison to what they went through."

"I will never forget shaking the hand of a Bataan survivor before the march," said Staff Sgt. Louis du Randt, with the 211th Engineer Company in Madison. "We only did 26 miles with water points every few miles - he did twice the distance without any help."

Participants in the event include individuals, teams, runners, walkers, marchers, active duty, Guard and Reserve, wounded warriors, and veterans and each finds their own reason to complete the marathon-length march.

"I was there to commemorate the Soldiers of Bataan and to challenge myself," said du Randt, who drew additional inspiration from Soldiers marching with prosthetics.

"Those are people to look up too," du Randt said. "It doesn't matter how bad you have it, there are Soldiers out there that have it far worse, and still do not give up."

It was great to participate as a team and finish the march together, said Staff Sgt. Mark Poncelet, 211th Engineer Company.

Since its 1989 inception, the memorial march has grown from about 100 to more than 6,500 participants from across the U.S. and several foreign countries.

"Attending the Bataan was an amazingly rewarding experience and I'm already looking forward to attending next year," said Mattfield.

196th MEB PREPARES FOR REAL-WORLD OPERATIONS

By Sgt. Mark VanGerpen

196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade

Four hundred South Dakota Army National Guard Soldiers came together for a unique three-day Field Training Exercise, May 1-3, in Sioux Falls.

The exercise brought together 12 units under the command of the 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade for a large-scale, joint operation in a simulated wartime scenario.

"The biggest benefit is being able to bring all the units of the brigade together," said Maj. Troy Nelson, assistant operations officer with the MEB. "It gives us a chance to train in a different environment from the armory. In the field we can actually practice our field craft skills, take our equipment out and set it up, make sure its serviceable, and give everybody who hasn't been to the field for a while a chance to see the equipment work and practice what we're trained to do."

On the surface, the weekend's mission required Soldiers to restore essential services and civil security to a war-torn fictional country.

In reality, it was a test of the 196th's readiness to deploy and establish a vast system of security operations quickly and efficiently.

In the space of two days, the 196th erected a tactical operations center housing a powerful computer network capable of coordinating and supporting dozens of operations at once. Supporting battalions then conducted a wide array of operations, one of which was to construct a bridge across an impassable stream.

The 200th Engineer Company deployed the mobile heavy dry-span bridge for the task. The bridge is one of only eight in the nation and is solid enough to bear the weight of any vehicle the Army owns.

On a typical drill weekend, units like the 200th train on their own. Exercises on the scale of the FTX take complex, long-term planning.

Extended exercises can take up to 18 months to plan and prepare.

Bringing that force together creates a realistic training environment that closely resembles a deployed environment, providing training opportunities that are not usually available.

The property the 196th used for training belongs to Sioux Falls resident Tom Sweetman. Sweetman allows the SDARNG to train on his land every year, and has done so for the past 15 years at no cost to the SDARNG.

"What (the SDARNG does) keeps us safe, so whatever we can do to help, in anyway we can, we're happy to do it," Sweetman said.

In all the years the SDNG has trained on his property, Sweetman had not visited the training until this year.

"It's far more substantial than I envisioned," Sweetman said during a tour of the site. "The equipment, the trucks, the supplies...you just don't realize the extent of what it takes to support 400 people."

The entire FTX was a test run for the MEB's upcoming annual training in Camp Ripley, Minn. There, the tasks performed by the units for three days at the FTX will be intensified and last two weeks.

"It gives us a chance to truly practice and refine what we're going to do when we go to (annual training) at Camp Ripley," Ness said.

The FTX culminated in a digitally conducted brigade update brief, which consisted of the unit leaders conducting a full-scale update for the commander using the satellite communications network the Soldiers had linked up during the training.

"Every section did what they needed to do, and the BUB indicated that," Ness said. "What it really shows is a lot of hard work and effort by the Soldiers to work together as a team. We had some trials and tribulations, but we worked through them to accomplish our mission."



Staff Sgt. KC Ducheneaux sets the pylons on a heavy dry-span bridge at a field training exercise for the 196th. (Photo by Sgt. Mark VanGerpen)

THE NEW ARMY BA



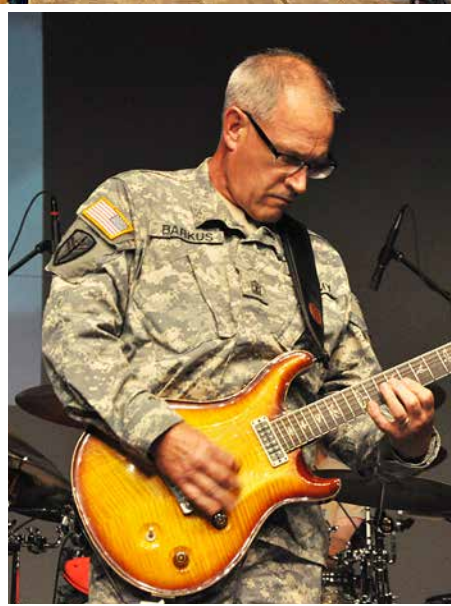
By Sgt. Michelle Monroe
147th Army Band

A cotton t-shirt, electric guitar and a funky beat are probably not the first things that come to mind when envisioning an Army band, but if you see the music performance teams of South Dakota's Own 147th Army Band, there is a good chance that is exactly what you will see.

For the first time in SDARNG history, the 147th Army Band is at the frontline of the evolving Army Bands' structure. After a recent inspection by the DA staff band officers, the 147th is feeling confident that they are heading in the right direction.

"We're very excited about the results of our inspection," said Chief Warrant Officer 4 Terry Beckler, commanding officer of the 147th Army Band. "We had both National Guard and active duty staff band officers hear our groups and they were impressed. Having high level validation of our product is fantastic! I couldn't be more proud of the work that our Soldiers do."

The mission of the Army Band has changed as the demographic of the Soldiers, the Army missions, and music itself has changed over the years. The original Army band consisted of young boys playing the life and drum, marching on the frontlines. Their mission was to relay commands to Soldiers. Soon after, the concert band and parade band gained precedence. Then the U.S. swung into the era of big band music and the jazz bands become the hottest ensemble around. Now, Soldiers want to hear rock, country, and pop so the Army Bands adapt their tactics to accomplish



that mission and bring new music to the Soldiers.

An Army Band consists of multiple music performance teams that can stand independently from the rest of the band. The varying musical styles of the MPTs accommodate the different missions for which Army Bands are tasked. MPTs throughout the Army Band field may range from vocal groups to chamber ensembles and even popular music ensembles, all with their audiences' needs in mind.

AND



This new tactic creates an opportunity for the Army Bands to perform more missions while accommodating a wider variety of venues.

When the MPTs aren't rocking out, they are still able to join together with other MPTs in the unit to create large ensembles for ceremonial music, concert band, and even marching band.

The new mission and structure of the Army bands creates many faces for the same unit. South Dakota's Own 147th Army Band may be represented

by SGT Rock, FTX, Drive On, MEB, and Black Ops; respectively, the unit's rock band, hip-hop group, country band, brass group, and easy-listening popular ensemble. Each MPT makes an effort to arrange music to their styles that today's Soldiers and families can connect with.

The next time you see an MPT of South Dakota's Own 147th Army Band, don't be surprised if they show up with their guitars-in-hand and the amps turned up to 11.

DEN OF MEMORIES

CAMP RAPID ESTABLISHMENT OFFERS TROOPS, VETS PLACE FOR CAMARADERIE

By SDNG Public Affairs Office

For nearly 45 years, The Coyote Den located on Camp Rapid has offered troops, veterans and military retirees with a place to relax, share stories of their service and enjoy the company of others who are part of the rich tradition of America's military.

Many stories of active-duty service, drill weekends, annual training and overseas deployments have been shared within the building's walls. It's become a "den of memories" by those who frequent the social establishment – keeping alive the spirit of the American Soldier, Airman, Sailor and Marine.

"The Coyote Den is attractive to service members and their families because it's a place to gather with friends and share the joy of belonging to this great organization," said retired Chief Warrant Officer 5 Duke Doering, command historian for the SDNG. "It's a place where they can sometimes vent their feelings, but mostly it's a place to share experiences and friendship. It's a place of camaraderie."

The story of The Coyote Den, or "The Den" as it's affectionately become known, has a rich history of its own.

As a pub and social club, the Den not only offers its patrons a wide assortment of refreshments after a day's work, but is also a venue for hosting almost any event.

"The Coyote Den provides a warm, fun atmosphere for any party and the room rental is free for all Den members," said Shelley Luxem, Den manager. "We host tons of birthday parties, wedding receptions, and retirement and promotion parties."

"There are many activities and conferences that take place on Camp Rapid throughout the year that bring Soldiers from the eastern part of the state," said Lt. Col. Todd Bartunek, Den senior board member. "The Coyote Den provides a great place within walking distance from the barracks for the Soldiers to have a pizza and a cold drink."

Since 1924, Camp Rapid has been the headquarters for the South Dakota National Guard and a major training location for the state's militia. Year after year, troops would train in the camp's Rapid City location and surrounding Black Hills area.

As the size of the state's National Guard grew – and use of Camp Rapid's unique training location – a recommendation was made in 1970 by the SDNG headquarters staff to provide troops with an open mess, which was approved by the adjutant general at the time, Maj. Gen. Duane Corning.

"The staff determined that the open mess should be at the site of the old boxing ring on the south side of Camp Rapid," said Doering.

According to Doering, Chief Warrant Officer

4 Richard Walker was in charge of the camp's buildings and grounds at the time. Since there was no Facilities Management Office in 1971, Walker, who had a good working agreement with Ellsworth Air Force Base, learned they were going to destroy six classroom buildings at the base.

Rather than pay to have them destroyed, Doering says Walker offered base officials to have the buildings moved to Camp Rapid, which they did. The moving cost was \$1,500 for each building.

The site was prepared, a foundation built, and in 1971 the mover set the building on the same location it stands today.

"The wood frame building was hastily built in 1942 and required some repair and remodel work," said Doering. "Walker found volunteers in the ranks – like Dick Trankle, Corky Williamson and Dick Noble – who spent many nights and weekends after hours completing the remodel."

When it came time to name the open mess, picking a name was quite simple according to Walker.

"We decided since we were the coyote state, wearing the coyote patch, we should name the open mess The Coyote Den," he said.

As The Den began to evolve, it became more popular with visiting National Guard, Reserve and foreign militaries who attend the Golden Coyote training exercise in June, which has run annually for the past 31 years in the Black Hills.



"During annual training, the Coyote Den provides the units attending the exercise a great place to host their unit parties," said Bartunek. "The patio in the back is covered and has two large gas grills to take care of the cooking. There is ample seating outside on the picnic tables and the Den staff enjoys working with the many units that have passed through Camp Rapid during AT."

As The Den grew in popularity, so did the demand for a bigger space to accommodate its patrons.

In 1989, Facilities Management Officer Col. Jerry Hoenke attended a board meeting and stated that he had an Air Force "Prime Beef" team coming to Camp Rapid for annual training and if the Den wanted some help on the physical building, he would have them provide it. The board readily accepted.

The building had two entry doors, one at each end of the building. Board members Doering and Sgt. Bill White drew up a rough set of plans on how they envisioned the building would look. It would have a door in the center, under a peak added to the roof, with a red awning covering the steps.

In the summer of 1989, the facilities engineer formalized the plans and the remodel was completed under the oversight of the Camp Rapid facilities manager, Chief Warrant Officer 4 Mike O'Connor.

Other improvements to The Den were made over the years, with a major addition being added to the west end of the building, with an additional outside patio area to the north. Luxem says the expansion has led to more events and activities being offered at the establishment.

"We host several steak nights during the summer," she said. "The intent is to provide a great, inexpensive meal and give Soldiers and retirees a chance to socialize. The retirees love these events and we usually serve around 70-80 steak dinners."

"We have several potlucks throughout the year that coincide with St. Patrick's Day, Halloween, New Years Eve, and a great Super Bowl party, to name a few," continued Luxem. "We have Pinochle that runs every Thursday from September to April and Texas Hold'em from November to April. The Marine Corps and the Minuteman Credit Union hold their monthly meetings here every month. Everyone is welcome to join."

Luxem says a Coyote Den membership is \$30 a year. A membership gets you free room rental to their party room, the ability to write checks to the Den, and the opportunity to cash out the lucky Den pot every Friday if your number is drawn. Members also receive a drink punch card good for a free drink every month. The \$30 membership also provides financial support to the Den during the slow months of the year.

As The Coyote Den continues to evolve, one thing that is sure to remain are the current and prior service members that pass through its doorways – where old and new memories will be made and told by the troops, veterans and retirees who call The Den home.

"The young Soldiers should see the Den as a place for mentorship, bonding and learning," said Luxem. "The Den can be enjoyed responsibly. In the few years I've been with the Den, I have heard some very colorful stories."

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WOMEN SOLDIERS

take on unexpected roles

By Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Herrmann
129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

You might not expect a local female hair stylist or preschool teacher is operating or fixing bulldozers, scrapers and dump trucks outside of their job, but for women serving in the South Dakota Army National Guard's 842nd Engineer Company it's common.

These female Soldiers are breaking the stereotypes of what it means to serve as woman in today's National Guard and they serve in unexpected roles.

"More and more female Soldiers are enlisting in positions that have been traditionally perceived as male only positions, such as heavy equipment operator or diesel mechanic within the 842nd," said Capt. Matt Sadler, 842nd commander. "I've also seen other company's within the state showing the same trend, females enlisting as truck drivers, artillery, etc."

Of the unit's approximately 160 members, 25 are women. Most serve as heavy equipment operators or heavy wheeled-vehicle mechanics. Based in Spearfish, Belle Fourche and Sturgis, the unit is a horizontal construction company that uses heavy machinery to build roads, airstrips and combat outposts and forward operating bases.

"Working with loaders and scrapers is a bit out of my comfort zone," said Pfc. Jessica Kling, who teaches preschool in Lemmon and operates heavy equipment in the 842nd. "I wouldn't choose to do this in my civilian life, but the National Guard gives me the opportunity to do something new and exciting."

These engineers also serve the state in the event of emergencies such as building levees during flood operations, removing topsoil during wildfire operations and assisting emergency crews during winter storms.

"I never would have imagined doing any of this before I joined," said Kling. "I figured I'm a girl, I don't need to do that kind of stuff, but once you start it's kind of fun."

Operating large equipment such as an excavator, a 24,000 pound machine, capable of digging 14 feet deep, can make you feel empowered.

"High and mighty," said Kling, on how she feels when operating the large powerful road graders, bulldozers and excavators. "They are really intimidating at first... I think everyone has felt that way."

For most Soldiers, the intimidation factor tends to fade after spending two weeks behind the wheel during annual training.

"I've learned the most at annual training," said Kling. "There is a lot of work and planning that goes into building a road. I didn't know I was

Pfc. Jessica Kling takes commands from her ground guide while backing up a dump truck during the Battle of the Blades training exercise.





Spcs. Kayleigh Lane, Wiyaka Stands, Rachel Newton and Sgt. Danielle Walraven are all heavy-wheeled mechanics at FMS #1 in Sturgis.



Pfc. Jessica Kling takes commands from her ground guide while backing up a dump truck.

capable of doing this and once you see the end result it's pretty cool."

For many of the women who work full time in what many people might consider traditional female careers, they get surprised or shocked reactions when explaining their job as Soldiers to their customers.

"Whenever I have a client in my chair and they ask about my life outside of cosmetology school I tell them I am a construction worker in the National Guard," said Pfc. Savannah Wheeler, of Box Elder. "Their faces drop and they are like 'What?'"

Choosing to be a mechanic in the National Guard wasn't a surprise for the family members of Spc. Kayleigh Lane, of Sturgis, who owns her own hair salon in Belle Fourche.

"As a child, I grew up working on cars with my dad," said Lane. "Mechanical work intrigues me, but I didn't want to do it full time, so I figured the National Guard would be the best way to do it."

Many of the women joined as mechanics in the 842nd to become more educated in maintaining and repairing vehicles. Heavy wheeled mechanics spend 13 weeks at advanced individual training learning how automotive engines work and how to trouble shoot to repair mechanical problems.

"I wanted to be a mechanic to learn how to fix my own car," said Wiyaka Stands, of Mission. "My car broke down in high school and it's expensive to fix, so I wanted to learn how to do it myself."

The women of the 842nd feel they have grown personally and professionally and would recommend other women considering an engineer job to join their ranks.

"Operating outside of my comfort zone has given me confidence," said Wheeler. "That is why I would suggest women join the 842nd. This unit has allowed me to push my boundaries and accomplish things I never thought I'd do."

THANK YOUR EMPLOYER FOR THEIR MILITARY SUPPORT

Everyday employers are recognizing and thanking their employees for a job well done and the contributions they provide to the company. But have you ever thought about how the employer is thanking you for your military service and supporting you through their HR policies and company practices?.

Since 9/11, South Dakota employers have supported their employees' military service in a wide variety of ways. Some employers have a formal policy that addresses the support during a military leave, while other companies' support is less formal and is a practice which is supported by company leadership. No matter how big or small that support is, you should thank your employer.

The South Dakota Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve can help you recognize your employer's commitment to your military service. Our awards program begins with the Patriot Award. This award reflects the efforts made to support Citizen Warriors through a wide-range of measures including flexible schedules, time off prior to and after deployment, caring for families and granting leaves of absence if needed.

The next award in the series is the Above and Beyond Award which recognizes employers at the local level who have gone above and beyond the legal requirements of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). These employers have provided their Guard and Reserve employees additional, non-mandated benefits such as differential or full pay to offset lost wages, extended health benefits, and other similar benefits.

The highest state level award an employer can earn is the Pro Patria Award. The South Dakota Pro Patria Award is presented annually by the State Chair to one employer. Recipients of the Pro Patria have demonstrated the greatest support to Guard and Reserve employees through their leadership and practices,



St. John's Lutheran Church accepts the National Pro Patria Award on behalf of the Yankton's church congregation at the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia in 2011. (Courtesy photo)

including adopting personnel policies that make it easier for employees to participate in the National Guard and Reserves.

ESGR's award program culminates with the Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award, the highest recognition given by the U.S. Government to employers for their outstanding support of employees serving in the Guard and Reserve.

Showing your appreciation of this support can create a powerful response in others and help increase their support and loyalty to you. It's impossible to predict exactly when or how someone wants to be thanked.

The ESGR awards are a powerful tool always at your disposal to help you thank your employer for their support. Don't forget to use them. Say thank you today!



Sgt. Jenna Gillespie, center, along with Laurie Fluit, ESGR volunteer, present Colton Parker and esurance with the Patriot Award for supporting Gillespie's SDNG service. (Courtesy photo)



WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

Billy was in third grade and that evening he came up to his dad and asked, "Dad what's sex?" His father became a bit red in the face, but then decided to explain to his little boy all about the "birds and bees". After a ten minute lecture, the father said, "Do you have any questions?" His little son a bit shocked looked at his dad and said, "All I want to know is do I put a check by the M or the F where it says sex on this school form?"

Some topics are tough to discuss with one's children and sex is one of them. But, sex and how we treat people sexually still needs to be talked about and maybe more now than ever. In our world today there are constant stories of rape, sexual abuse and sexual harassment. We live in a world where many people view other people as "mere sex objects" for their pleasure or amusement instead of seeing them as people. In school, in the work place, and in the military we are seeing more and more victims of sexual abuse because people fail to treat others as they should be treated. They are more interested in serving their own selfish interests instead of being concerned about the feelings and emotions of others.

Some folks argue, "What's the big deal? It's just a little harmless fun.

We're not hurting anyone." But they are hurting others. When teaching this subject to the youth we often point out, "if that person were your sister or your mother would you want someone saying those things about her? Would you want them to treat her or even you in that way?" During deployment overseas we saw how many women were starting to have some individual rights in a country where before the women were often treated as mere property. Sadly, in our own country we still see many in authority mistreating others.

The Bible contains stories over 3,000 years old that include rape, adultery and other immoral behavior. Those stories reveal that no nation has ever been made up of perfect people. One story concerns the great military leader, King David. Although he was a believer in God, he failed to control his lust and ended up committing adultery with Bathsheba, which then led to other crimes. It was a dark time in David's life. He repented of his sin and God forgave him, but there were consequences that affected his family and career.

The same is true today. Many leaders, including political and military leaders, along with movie stars and athletes, are being caught doing things they shouldn't be doing. Due to sexual misconduct, many careers have been ended, families torn apart by sexual abuse, marriages destroyed due to adultery, and in some cases, people's lives have been lost because they failed to treat others with respect. It needs to change and it starts with each one of us.

All of us are guilty of failing to care for others as we should. But we can change our own attitude and the attitude of others by starting now in treating every person as a human being regardless of their religious beliefs, their nationality, their gender or their skin color. We need to view every person as a special person. In the SDARNG we like to say "Every member counts" and they should. Every person counts as a unique person who is created by God and in God's sight how we treat each other is a big deal.

Respectfully,

Col. David Gunderson
Full-time Support Chaplain



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SNAP



Members of the 82nd Civil Support Team prepare the down range monitoring equipment (bomb robot) during a training exercise at the water reclamation plant in Sioux Falls, March 19. The CST will dress the robot with an array of chemical and radiation monitoring equipment to detect if there is a hazard present in order to determine what level of personal protective equipment is needed to make entry into the incident area. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Luke Olson)



Lt. Col. Wyatt Hanson participates in the 41st annual National Guard Bureau's Biathlon Championships at Camp Ethan Allen Training Site in Jericho, Vermont, March 3. (Courtesy Photo)



Chief Master Sgt. Jennifer Reecy, South Dakota Air National Guard Headquarters superintendent, talks with unit members and their spouses during the Yellow Ribbon reintegration program event at the Sioux Falls Convention Center, April 11. The event came prior to deployment of Airmen from the SDANG and was designed to prepare Airmen and their spouses for stresses and possible needs that can arise during a deployment. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Christopher Stewart)



Sgts. 1st Class Grant Serna, Chad Mercy, Master Sgt. Mike Witte and Staff Sgt. Adam Witte placed first in the mover match during the 44th Winston P. Wilson Championship at Camp Joseph T. Robison, Little Rock, Arkansas, May 1. The team of four placed all 60 rounds into the moving targets. (Courtesy photo)

SHOTS



Sgt. Anna Simons guides the lead vehicles over a bridge on the convoy mission route on a three-day field training exercise conducted by Company A, 139th Brigade Support Battalion, May 1, in Sioux Falls. (Photo by Spc. Jerico White)



Spcs. Robert Phillips and Christopher Murray, both with the Company B, 139th Brigade Support Battalion, work on their recovery vehicle as they prepare to tow a disabled vehicle during a field training exercise near Sioux Falls, May 1. (U.S. Army National Guard photo)



Staff Sgt. Louis Durandt, a member of the 211th Engineer Company, crosses the finish line at the Lincoln National Guard Marathon, May 3, in Lincoln, Nebraska. Approximately 200 members of the Air and Army National Guard from all 50 states and four U.S. territories competed in the race for one of 55 spots on the National Guard All-Guard Marathon Team. (Courtesy Photo)

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